



Building Industry Association of Southern California, Inc.

March 18, 2020

Chairman Curt Hagman
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415

SUBJECT: Housing Construction Policies & COVID-19

Dear Chairman Curt Hagman:

The Building Industry Association of Southern California (BIASC) writes to you regarding the creation of new polices intended to combat COVID-19 and the need to continue to address Southern California's critical housing needs.

As one of the largest home building associations in the nation, BIASC is a leading advocate for thousands of building industry leaders who are committed to a better future by building communities, creating jobs, and ensuring housing opportunities for everyone.

As you are well aware, six counties in California's Bay Area issued a "[Shelter in Place](#)" Public Health Order. As part of this order, the counties specifically exempted certain critical needs, including "*essential public infrastructure construction, including housing*". Should you decide the need to issue a similar order, we strongly encourage that your jurisdiction exempt homebuilding, hardware retailers, and associated businesses supplying homebuilding materials.

If your jurisdiction has implemented a Shelter in Place policy, or if it is considering doing so, we would respectfully request that the following language be included in the Public Health Order:

"For purposes of this Order, individuals may leave their residence to provide any services or perform any work necessary to the operations and maintenance of 'Essential Infrastructure,' including, but not limited to, public works construction, the permitting, inspection, construction, transfer and recording of ownership, of housing and anything incidental thereto."

As we collectively work to address the massive housing shortfall facing the Southern California region during this difficult time, it is our hope that homebuilding plans receive regular review, permits continue to be issued, and that field inspections take place. Specifically, we would like to highlight the importance of inspections in completing site

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Riverside County

development and home construction. If there are newly enacted policies in response to COVID-19, we hope that housing entitlement and occupancy processes and procedures continue to move forward – or that alternative mitigation measures be introduced.

While it is critical that we work in unison to protect public health during this pandemic, we must do all that we can to avoid exacerbating the housing and shelter shortfall already facing Southern California residents. If closing services such as escrow, title, and the Recorder's office are not open, ownership will not transfer, and buyers still cannot move in. In addition, we believe that a vibrant home construction industry can play a vital role in supporting our economy during these strenuous economic times.

We appreciate your leadership in addressing the current health pandemic. The homebuilding industry remains committed to working with you to help keep housing affordable and our communities safe. We appreciate your consideration regarding the requests outlined in this letter. Should you have any questions, please contact BIASC Public Affairs Manager, Karissa Willette at kwillette@biasc.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Montejano", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeff Montejano
Chief Executive Officer